

**Remarks/Arguments**

Applicants have noted with appreciation that a number of claims have been allowed. Claims 11-23 have been cancelled. Claims remaining in consideration are claims 1-10.

Amendments Unrelated to Patentability

Applicants have modified claim 1 to include "a casing at least partially surrounding the exhaust fan for enhancing the ventilation power of the exhaust fan." The casing serves as an exhaust fan housing. The Office Action states, "[an exhaust fan housing] limitation would not make the instant claims patentable in light of the enormous prior art teachings of combines with exhaust fan/straw choppers having housings." As such, the addition of this claim element cannot be related to patentability. Thus, it is added only for clarity. Therefore, this correction is not related to patentability and no new matter has been added by this amendment.

Claim 4 has been amended to specify "and" instead of "or." This change is only made to meet the terms of MPEP 2173.05(h) and is not related to patentability.

Claim rejections

Claims 1-4, 6, and 10 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Hall (U.S. Patent No. 5,586,033). Claim 1 has been amended, as noted above, to specify a casing at least partially surrounds the exhaust fan and to clarify how each air stream is produced. The first air stream is produced by the exhaust fan (i.e. the combination crop comminutor/exhaust fan) "from the area of the crop through-gap to the exhaust fan to support crop movement." Previously, Applicants remarked how the Hall "straw spreader 44 cannot generate an air stream to support the crop movement inside the combine. . ." The present Office Action responds that the straw spreader 44 does generate at least some air stream, even if a trivial one. Applicants do not dispute this fact. Applicants merely point out that Hall does not disclose a crop comminutor/exhaust fan that generates an air stream which supports crop movement inside the machine. Hence Hall does not anticipate claim 1. Claims 2-4, 6, and 10 depend from claim 1 and include all of the limitations thereof. Moreover, these claims

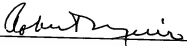
Appl. No. 10/027,019  
Amdt. dated September 3, 2003  
Reply to Office Action of June 9, 2003

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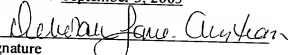
include additional structural and functional differences from the cited references. Therefore, claims 1-4, 6 and 10 are deemed in allowable condition.

For the reasons stated above, Applicants believe the application is in condition for allowance and a timely Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,  
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